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Spy radio seized in POW foray

NAKHON PHANOM, Thailand (UPI) — Former Green Beret officer James "Bo" Gritz attempted to use a spy radio to transmit messages direct to Washington during a search for American prisoners of war in Laos, U.S. sources said yesterday.

Gritz said two other Americans involved in the Laos mission would surrender to Thai police today for questioning.

David Scott Weekly, of Encinitas, Calif., and Gary Goldman, 38, of Los Angeles, were reported to be ready to surrender to Thai authorities here.

Weekly earned the nickname "Dr. Death" as an armaments expert in the U.S. Navy, and Goldman has been described by associates as a soldier of fortune.

Gritz resurfaced Monday from an apparent secret mission into Laos, saying he found evidence at least 10 American POWs are still alive a decade after the end of the war in Indochina.

Thai police were holding the barrel-chested, blue-eyed mercenary in the Mekong River town of Nakhom Phanom, 390 miles northeast of Bangkok, on charges of possessing a radio which they seized Feb. 13 in a home rented by Gritz.

U.S. sources in Bangkok said the radio was the latest in U.S.-made spy gear with a powerful transmitter that was to have been used to send messages from Laos straight to Washington.

But Thai police seized the radio in Nakhon Phanom before it could be used. Possession of any radio transmitter without a license is illegal.

The disclosure of the radio's type and purpose bolstered the credibility of Gritz's statements that his first mission into Laos last November and his apparently just-completed second mission were carried out with the blessing of U.S. intelligence officials.

Both the CIA and the Defense Intelligence Agency have denied any involvement with Gritz, but the California native said he expected support from President Reagan.

"I believe that when the time comes he (Reagan) will throw whatever weight is required to help those Americans that have been positively identiffed," Gritz said.

The United States lists 2,500 Americans missing in action during the war.

Lynn Standerwick and Lance Trimmer, two other Americans, were arrested when Thai police discovered the high-powered radio.

"The radio gear doesn't have a damn thing to do with them," Gritz said. "It is my responsibility." STAT